

Dear Public Health Committee:

My name is Steffen Eve Costantini and my husband, Marco and I live in Guilford, Connecticut. My husband is an architect in Hamden, and I am a freelance photographer and writer in the greater New Haven area. We are the parents of three children ages 14, 11, and 9 and our middle child, Joshua, has Autism and Down Syndrome. He attends ACES Village School in North Haven and also receives ABA services through the ACES home care program four times weekly.

As a mother who has fought fiercely to get Joshua the services he needs to enable him to become be an independent member of society, my husband and I cannot begin to express how indebted we are to the ACES home program for their dedication, competence and the wonderful work they have done with our son. With these vital reinforcements from the ACES staff, Joshua is nearing to becoming independently toilet-trained and self-sufficient in many areas. Without these ABA services, we would fear to consider how limited his life skills would be.

What's most important in the greater picture is to start these services at a young age, so that the financial burden will be significantly reduced in the future. The time to put these ABA programs in place is now. We are doing the best for our son now while his is young and still developing. Without the added support of the ACES home program, there is no doubt that Joshua's progress would be thwarted.

My husband and I wholeheartedly support SB 1089 sections 23-29 and plead with you to pass this bill. It is absolutely crucial to our son and the entire population of disabled individuals in Connecticut receiving these services in our state. We must take care of our disabled!

Sincerely,

Steffen and Marco Costantini